

# Open letter from the soldiers

Statement from some anonymous Greek soldiers stating that they will refuse to repress worker and student demonstrations.

Hundreds of soldiers from the forty-two districts state that:

We refuse to become a force of terror and repression against the mobilisations; we support the struggle of the school and university students and the workers. We are soldier from all over Greece. We are soldiers who, very recently, in Hania, have been ordered to turn on and bear weapons against university students, workers and combatants in the anti-militarist movement. Soldiers who bear the weight of the reforms and "tactical manoeuvres" of the Greek army. The soldiers who live daily amongst the ideological oppression of militarism, of nationalism, of un-remunerated exploitation and submission to "our superiors".

In the army barracks, we learnt about another "isolated incident": the death, at the hands of an armed police officer, of a fifteen-year-old named Alexis. We heard it in the slogans carrying over the exterior walls of the camp like distant thunder. Weren't the deaths of three of our colleagues in August also called "isolated incidents"? Haven't they also called the deaths of each of the forty-two soldiers in the last three and a half years "isolated incidents"? We believe that Athens, Thessaloniki, and a growing number of Greek cities have become areas of social agitation, environments in which the resentment of thousands of young people, workers, and unemployed people resounds, while we are dressed in army uniforms and "working attire," guarding the camp or running errands, being servants of "our superiors." We have seen, as have university students, workers and desperately unemployed people, their "clay pots," "accidental backfirings," "bullet deflections," as well as the desperation of precarity, of exploitation, of lay-offs and of prosecutions.

We hear the rumours and insinuations of the army officials, we hear the threats of the government, made public, about the imposition of a state of emergency. We know very well what this means. We are living it through an intensification of work, and the increase of our tasks, intense conditions with a finger on the trigger.

Yesterday we received the order to take care and "keep our eyes peeled." We are asking: whom are you ordering us to be careful of?

Today we have been ordered to be prepared and on alert. We are asking: with whom do we have to be on alert? We have been ordered to be ready to bring the state of emergency into action.

There has been a distribution of arms shipments amongst certain units in Atica [where Athens is situated], accompanied by orders to use them against the civilian population in the case of threats (for example, orders were given to one unit in Menidia, close to the attacks against the Zephiro police station). There has been a distribution of bayonets to soldiers in Evros [along the Turkish border]. They are aiming to inspire fear in the demonstrators by setting out squads in the area around the army barracks.

They have moved police vehicles to army camps in Nauplia-Tripoli-Corinth for safekeeping. There was a "confrontation" on behalf of Major I. Konstantaros in the recruits' training barracks in Thiva regarding the identification of soldiers by shop-owners whose property had been damaged. there has been a distribution of plastic bullets in the Corinthian recruits' training barracks and the order to fire against citizens if they move "in a threatening manner" (against whom?).

A special unit was ordered to the statue of the "Unknown Soldier" just in front of the demonstrators on Saturday the 13th of December, and soldiers from the Nauplia recruits' training camp were put into action against a workers' demonstration. They are threatening citizens with Special-Ops units from Germany and Italy - in the role of occupying forces - thus revealing the true face of an anti-worker/authoritarian EU.

The police shoot with the objective of present and future social revolts. In order to accomplish this they are preparing the army to take on the functions of a police force and they are preparing society to accept the return of an army of Reforms' Totalitarianism. They are preparing us to oppose our friends, the people we know and our brothers and sisters. they are preparing us to oppose our past and future workmates and classmates. This series of measures shows that the leadership of the army, the police with the consent of Hinofoties (ex-member of the professional army, currently vice-interior minister, responsible for the internal "unrest"), the army headquarters, the government, the EU directives, the small shopkeeper as an angry citizen and the far-right groups are looking to use the armed forces as an occupying army (isn't it called Peace Corps when its sent to a foreign country to do exactly the same thing?) in the cities where we grew up, in our neighbourhoods, in the streets through which we've walked. The political and military leaders forget that we are part of the youth. They forget that we are made of the same stuff as the youth which is coming face to face with the bleak wasteland of reality inside and outside of a military camp. A youth which is furious, un-subjugated and, even more importantly, fearless.

We are civilians in uniform. We will not accept being turned into free tools of fear that some are trying to implant in society like a scarecrow. we will not accept being turned into a force of repression and terror. We will not oppose the people with whom we share the same fears, needs, and desires, the same common future, the same dangers and the same hopes. We refuse to take the streets, under the name of any state of emergency, against our brothers and sisters. As young people in uniform we express our solidarity with a fighting people and we state that we won't turn ourselves into pawns of a police state and of state repression.

We will never fight our own people. We will not allow, in the army corps, the imposition of a situation which brings back the "days of 1967."